



Don Mee Choi

Talks

JAN 19, 2024
8:30 PM

PRESENTED BY
REDCAT
Roy and Edna Disney
CalArts Theater
CaLARTS
California Institute of the Arts

We gratefully acknowledge that we operate on the traditional lands of the Tongva, Tataviam, and Chumash peoples—including the Gabrieleño, Fernandefño, and Ventureño; members of the Takic and Chumashan language families; and other Indigenous peoples who made their homes in and around the area we now call Los Angeles. We honor their ancestors past, present, and future, and recognize their continued existence and contributions to our society.

Don Mee Choi

Don Mee Choi is a markedly influential figure in contemporary experimental poetry, combining the visual, the documentary, and the lyrical in her highly acclaimed books. Choi's *Kor-Us Trilogy* (*Hardly War*, *DMZ Colony*, and the forthcoming *Mirror Nation*) intertwines her family history with the troubled and complex modern history of South Korea and its long entanglement with the power and ambitions of the United States. 2024's Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence, Choi has already received some of the highest honors a literary artist can achieve—the National Book Award for 2020's *DMZ Colony* and a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in recognition of her work in poetry and in the field of translation, where she's introduced many English readers to some of the most innovative poets working in South Korea today. This evening of immersion in Choi's work at REDCAT reflects how she expands our understanding of what poetry can do, while challenging us to experience the many layers of personal and cultural experience we call history.

Presented by REDCAT, the MFA Program in Creative Writing of the California Institute of the Arts, the Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence Program, and GYOPO.

The conversation is organized with GYOPO. The book signing is in collaboration with Skylight Books.

PROGRAM

Introduction by Anthony McCann (Director, MFA Program in Creative Writing, CalArts)

Reading by Don Mee Choi

Conversation Introduction by Ellie Lee (Steering Committee Chair and Co-Founder of GYOPO)

Conversation with Don Mee Choi and Youna Kwak

Reception and Book Signing in The Olga Garay-English and Dr. Kerry English REDCAT Lounge

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Born in Seoul, South Korea, **Don Mee Choi** (pronounced “Chae”) is the author of the National Book Award-winning collection *DMZ Colony* (Wave Books, 2020), *Hardly War* (Wave Books, 2016), *The Morning News Is Exciting* (Action Books, 2010), and several pamphlets of poems and essays. She is a recipient of fellowships from the MacArthur, Guggenheim, Lannan, and Whiting Foundations, as well as the DAAD Artists-in-Berlin Program. She has translated several collections of Kim Hyesoon's poetry, including *Autobiography of Death* (New Directions, 2018), which received the International Griffin Poetry Prize. As the MacArthur Foundation wrote in awarding Choi its fellowship in 2021: “Choi's intertwined practices as poet and translator bear witness to otherwise unspeakable histories and expand the range of expressive possibilities for writers from diasporic and multilingual backgrounds.” | donmeechoi.com

Youna Kwak is a poet, teacher, and translator, born in Seoul, Korea, and based in Southern California. She is the author of the poetry collection *sur vie* (Fathom Books, 2022) and two French-to-English translations, *Gardeners* (by Véronique Bizot) and *Daewoo: a novel* (by François Bon) (2017, 2020, Diálogos Press). You can find more of her work at kwakyouna.com.

The Katie Jacobson Writer in Residence Program is named in honor of CalArts Creative Writing alumna Katie Jacobson whose dedication to public literary engagement in Los Angeles was much noted in her lifetime. CalArts is thankful to Katie's family for their generous donation which enables this yearly series.

The CalArts MFA Program in Creative Writing is unique in the field of Creative Writing for the way it combines a dedication to experimental practice and a resolutely non-genre tracking curriculum. At CalArts writing is understood as an art form best practiced alongside the other arts. Core Faculty members are Brian Evenson, Carribean Fragoza, Chris Santiago, Gabrielle Civil, Muriel Leung, Janet Sarbanes, Matias Viegner and Anthony McCann.

GYOPO is a collective of diasporic Korean cultural producers and arts professionals generating and sharing progressive, critical, intersectional and intergenerational discourses, community alliances, and free educational programs in Los Angeles and beyond.

REDCAT TECHNICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Director of Production &

Technical Director: ADAM MATTHEW

Interim Technical Director: TONY SHAYNE

Associate TD, Sound and Video: PETE PACE

Associate TD, Lighting: CHU-HSUAN CHANG

Audio Engineer: OLIVIA POPEJOY

Lighting Operator: CHRISTA TROESTER

Camera Operator: NAT NICHOLAS

Deck: ANDREW CHILD

Steven D. Lavine Executive Director of REDCAT &

Vice President for Cultural Partnerships: JOÃO RIBAS

Facilities and Production Manager: JACQUES BOUDREAU

Box Office and Visitor Services Manager: BRENT CHARLES

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Deputy Director, Finance and Operations: ALLISON KEATING

Front of House Manager: NAOMI OPPENHEIM

Chief Curator and Deputy Director, Programs: DANIELA LIEJA QUINTANAR

Administrative Manager: ROLANDO RODRIGUEZ

Executive Producer: DIANA WYENN

UPCOMING AT REDCAT

Denise Ferreira da Silva and Arjuna Neuman: *Soot Breath / Corpus Infinitum*

January 20

Soot Breath / Corpus Infinitum—a film dedicated to tenderness—is the third collaboration between renowned writer and artist Denise Ferreira da Silva and filmmaker Arjuna Neuman. Interrogating empathy and violence, the film traces the transformations enacted on the natural world in the modern period, wherein living and non-living things have been treated as a standing reserve from which to extract resources.

Miko Revereza: *Nowhere Near*

January 22

Through the lenses of Miko Revereza—an undocumented Filipino immigrant in the US—this poetic essay film features their experience and disillusionment of their future in the country and the decision to return to an estranged homeland. Moving into fragmented streams of consciousness, *Nowhere Near* tracks down the origin of a family curse, retracing the generational harm of the post-9/11 era, the US occupation of the Philippines, and the spiritual conquest of the Spanish Empire.

Aya Ogawa: *The Nosebleed*

February 1 - 3

Are we doomed to repeat the mistakes of our parents? Through a series of absurd, autobiographical vignettes, innovative playwright, performer, translator, and director Aya Ogawa's hit 2022 Obie Award-winning show irreverently and boldly delves into what it takes to forgive. A trip to Ogawa's home country of Japan, a child's nosebleed, and the reality TV show *The Bachelor* come together in this darkly comical and psychologically insightful theatrical tribute to Ogawa's father. Part theatrical memorial performed by an ensemble of five, part healing ritual for the audience, this darkly humorous, tender, and inventive play considers how we inherit and bequeath failure, and what it takes to forgive.



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